merce, and literature, expand the mind, deſpots are compelled, to make covert corruption hold faſt the power which was formerly ſnatched by open force*. And this baneful lurking gangrene is moſt quickly ſpread by luxury and ſuperſtition, the ſure dregs of ambition. The indolent puppet of a court firſt becomes a luxurious monſter, or faſtidious ſenſualiſt, and then makes the contagion which his unnatural ſtate ſpread, the inſtrument of tyranny.

It is the peſtiferous purple which renders the progreſs of civilization a curſe, and warps the underſtanding, till men of ſenſibility doubt whether the expanſion of intellect produces a greater portion of happineſs or miſery. But the nature of the poiſon points out the antidote; and had Rouſſeau mounted one ſtep higher in his inveſtigation, or could his eye have pierced through the foggy atmoſphere, which he almoſt diſdained to

* Men of abilities ſcatter ſeeds that grow up and have a great influence on the forming opinion; and when once the public opinion preponderates, through the exertion of reaſon, the overthrow of arbitrary power is not very diſtant.

breathe,

breathe, his active mind would have darted forward to contemplate the perfection of man in the eſtabliſhment of true civilization, inſtead of taking his ferocious flight back to the night of ſenſual ignorance.

CHAP.